

The Soldiers Of Ar-Rahmaan

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Taken from: Commanders of the Muslim Army, Pgs. 383-384

During the caliphate of 'Umar Farooq (Radiya 'Llahu 'anhu) the Muslim army was sent to conquer Egypt under the command of 'Amr bin al-'Aas (Radiya 'Llahu 'anhu). When he reached Egypt he saw a huge well-armed contingent of the enemy was already in the battlefield. When he realised the critical nature of the situation 'Amr bin al-'Aas (Radiya 'Llahu 'anhu) asked the caliph for reinforcements.

'Umar Farooq (Radiya 'Llahu 'anhu) arranged for an army of four thousand Mujahideen and sent them to Egypt. He appointed four generals to organise these fresh troops. Each general was responsible for a thousand men. One of these generals was 'Ubaadah bin as-Saamit (Radiya 'Llahu 'anhu). 'Umar Farooq (Radiya 'Llahu 'anhu) wrote to 'Amr bin al-'Aas (Radiya 'Llahu 'anhu):

"I am sending a fresh army of four thousand Mujahideen under four generals to help you. Among these is a general who by himself is equal to a thousand soldiers." [Meaning 'Ubaadah bin as-Saamit (Radiya 'Llahu 'anhu)]

The Muslim army was encamped in the field. The King of Egypt, Maqooqas, sent some spies to gauge the strength of the enemy and study the actual state of affairs. They disguised themselves and sneaked into the ranks of the Muslims and became friendly with them. After studying their tactics they gave the following report to their King:

"Your Majesty! We have seen a people who love death more than their lives. They prefer modesty and humility to arrogance and pomp. They are indifferent to the world and its trappings.

They sit on the floor when they eat. All of them dress in similar simple robes, and they all look the same. A stranger cannot differentiate between the ruler and the ruled. When it's time to pray they wash certain parts of their body, and then they form rows to stand in prayer. And when they pray it is as if they have nothing to do with the world at all.

It is a sight worth seeing when they prostrate themselves before their Maker and beg Him and plead with Him. The way they stand in prayer, folding their hands across their chests is unique. And when they bend low and then prostrate themselves, it is a sight worth seeing. When they stand in communal prayer, one person stands in the front and leads the prayers. All of them stand behind him in rows and follow his lead. When he stands they stand, when he bends they bend and when he prostrates they prostrate all together!

We have never seen this kind of organised discipline and obedience to the leader. Their faces appear radiant; they seem like a new race upon the earth."

When the Emperor of Egypt heard all this he was stunned. After thinking over the matter for some time he said:

"If these people are in reality such as you have described them to be, then it is certain we cannot oppose them or compare with them. Even the tallest of mountains cannot place obstacles in their path.

The best thing for us to do would be to forget about fighting with them and extend the hand of friendship and peace.

In my opinion if we lose the chance to make peace, we have lost a golden opportunity. Once they gain control over the golden lands watered by the Nile, we will never be able to get them back. If they establish themselves in our beloved land, we will never be able to oust them.

We should have formal negotiations with them; perhaps this will provide us with a better option."